

**Minutes of the Suffolk Schools' Forum held at 9.30 am on 29 November 2018 in the Conference Room, Landmark House, Ipswich**

**Present:**

<b>Non-School Members</b>	Amanda Havers, Early Years Helen Wilson, 16-19 Provider Sharon Waldron, Diocesan (Anglican) Maria Kemble, Diocesan (Catholic)
<b>Academy Members</b>	Debbie Ebbage (substitute for Lynn Eldrett), Mainstream Dawn Carmen-Jones, Mainstream Mark Kemp, Special Steve Lovett, Mainstream Colin Turner, Mainstream Julia Upton, Mainstream
<b>Maintained School Members</b>	Allison Coleman, Primary Governor (Chair) Dave Hutton, Secondary Head (Vice Chair) Alison Bowman, Governor Gillian Mitchell, Primary Graham Alcock, PRU

**Observers and Local Authority**

<b>Observers</b>	There were observers present at the meeting
<b>Local Authority</b>	Cllr Gordon Jones Sue Cook Adrian Orr Judith Mobbs Nathan Jones Duncan Johnson Brian Prettyman Paul Butcher Michael Quinton Teresa Spilling

Item No.	Item Description	
1.	Welcome and Apologies	Apologies for absence were received from Lil Newton, Jo Stanley-Bell, Lynn Eldrett, Louise Spall, Pat Chapman.

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		Debbie Ebbage attended as a substitute for Lynn Eldrett at this meeting.
2.	Minutes of the previous meeting & issues arising	<p>The minutes of the previous meeting held on 2 October were approved and signed by the Chair.</p> <p>Page 3-4 Early Years Funding: a meeting has been arranged to take place outside of Schools Forum on Tuesday 4 December with LA and Early Years Representatives.</p> <p>Page 6 – Academies funding services: if they choose to receive these services they will be charged.</p> <p>Page 7 – issues raised around Landlord duties. This is an item later in the meeting. Change around FSM eligibility charge for Academies, information provided as requested, when academies convert they have the funds for this as part of their funding agreement. Suffolk did this for free for a period but given the financial challenge now has to charge for this service. Communication could have been stronger about this change. Academies can buy this service from other providers, Suffolk offer is still good value for money.</p> <p>Charges at present are: Primary school just under 1% Secondary slightly more than 1%of the value of the PPG.</p> <p>Page 7 – Mental Health item: to be discussed later in meeting.</p> <p>Page 10 – Letter has been sent to all Academy and Free School Chief Executive Officers, Executive Heads, Principals and Headteachers for new forum academy reps – nomination closes 4 December at 5pm.</p> <p>We will soon be running an election for maintained representative due to conversion being delayed. Two additional representatives based on number of academies by end of December. 55/45 proportion. By July 2019 it is likely that the balance will be 60% academies and 40% maintained schools. There has been a national slow down of the conversion process. There has been a reduction in the processes that force academisation ie Primary accountability guidance (DfE 2018): schools will only be forced to academise if they have an Ofsted grade 4 judgement.</p>

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		<p>More information can be found in the: <a href="#">Schools Causing Concern document</a> (DfE Nov 2018)</p> <p>HW asked for a view on all schools becoming academies</p> <p>AO responded the Education team view is that the decision to become academy rests with school leaders, headteachers and governors. A significant number of LA maintained schools have good or better Ofsted judgements. Schools are no longer under the same pressure from government to convert. As stated earlier, by the end of the academic years it is probable that the balance point of 60-40 will be reached.</p>
3.	Update on appointment of Vice-Chair Nominations and Appointment	<p>Dave Hutton was asked to find a suitable candidate to take over as Vice Chair at Schools Forum meetings. He therefore approached Helen Wilson who has the experience of chairing meetings to see if she would take on this role. Helen has said she will be happy to be Vice Chair on a voluntary basis. Colin Turner seconded this vote and all members were in agreement.</p>
4.	CSSB Corporate Landlord Responsibilities	<p>Duncan Johnson was in attendance for this item along with Brian Prettyman and Paul Butcher. At the last meeting Forum asked for more of an overview of Landlord Duties and what funding was being used for.</p> <p>Services carried out under the general heading of Landlord Services are delivered to ensure that Schools and the County Council comply with Health and Safety legislation and can meet statutory obligations.</p> <p>The Landlord Duties and the funding for these is based on legacy arrangements which were created when most schools were Maintained, and the funds were primarily for the purpose of supporting the landlord duties of the Local Authority and the Maintained Schools.</p> <p>The Landlord Duties are completed on behalf of Suffolk County Council by Vertas Property Management and this funding enables the council, via Vertas, to retain a team of specialist "Property</p>

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		<p>Advisers” and support staff who provide a wide range of advice and practical measures to ensure that schools remain healthy, safe and open. This includes operating a 24/7 Property Support Line. They also offer Compliance Checks, Condition Surveys and Asbestos Management services.</p> <p>Funding for this service is essential to ensure that the Council, Schools and Academies can continue to comply with Health and Safety legislation and can meet statutory obligations associated with running the buildings used by schools and academies.</p> <p>In response to Forum Members’ queries, officers advised they would send out clearer guidance to schools around landlord duties around costs and services delivered.</p> <p><u>General landlord duties (all building owned by the LA)</u> Following a vote of 10 in favour and 3 against the Forum <b>agreed</b> by majority to an annual budget of £646,240.</p> <p><b>ACTIONS/OUTCOMES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duncan Johnson to issue clearer guidance for schools/academies to set out what support is covered by the Landlord Duties funding.</li> </ul>
5.	Schools Block Funding Formula: 2019-20	<p><b>What is the Forum being asked to decide?</b></p> <p>The paper provides an update on the planned implementation of the National Funding Formula (NFF) for schools’ budgets in 2019-20. No decision is required.</p> <p><b>Reason for recommendation</b></p> <p>There are no recommendations as the paper is for information only but the intention is to continue to follow the NFF to determine schools’ budgets in 2019-20.</p> <p>Final allocations based on October 18 census information will be made available to LAs on 16 December 2018. This means the Forum report for January may be slightly delayed after the Christmas period.</p>

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		<p>Looking more specifically at Schools Block funding, the increase from the baseline position in 2017-18 is 5.5% from £378.9m to £407.7m in 2019-20. Included within this increase is also indicative pupil growth of 1.1%.</p> <p>Discussion took place and various questions/queries raised around areas of the school block funding/high needs funding block.</p> <p>Gordon Jones (GJ) attended a HNF Group a couple of weeks ago; the group wrote to chancellor with regards to a number of points. GJ to share letter with Forum.</p> <p>GJ/SC at conference around funding Children's Services and Education, some success this year, the minister's view is to work with us to influence the Treasury. The Association of Directors are putting pressure on government to get this sorted, including via private meetings with children's minister.</p> <p><b>ACTIONS/OUTCOMES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steer from Forum Members at next meeting as to stick with NFF at the pace that MFG allows.</li> <li>• DSG consultation on deficits around HN block.</li> </ul>
6.	Introducing A New High Needs Funding System in Suffolk – Proposals for Transitional Support Arrangements	This item has been removed and will be presented in January.
7.	Policy for the Local Authority recoupment of funding after the permanent exclusion of a pupil from mainstream school – updated paper	<p><b>What is the Forum being asked to decide?</b></p> <p>To note the updates to the proposed Suffolk Policy for Recoupment of Funding following a Permanent Exclusion for implementation from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019. This paper was initially discussed at Schools Forum in July 2018. Suggested amendments have now been undertaken as requested at that meeting.</p> <p>To note the current position regarding schools' active support for the recoupment policy in Suffolk.</p>

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		<p><b>Reason for recommendation</b></p> <p>At Schools' Forum in November 2017 the elements of the new policy were agreed, and this item is therefore to comment on the final policy following that decision and request for further updates to be made.</p> <p><b>Alternative options</b></p> <p>Alternative options were considered in October 2017 and it was agreed then that this was the option that should be taken forward.</p> <p><b>Who will be affected by this decision?</b></p> <p>All schools in Suffolk.</p> <p>Judith Mobbs presented this item and stated that this policy has been through a number of iterations to achieve clarification for maintained and academy schools; including re the additional charge of £2,000. Forum supported this £2,000 cost. The end of the paper provides a summary of the current position and shows those schools who have outstanding debts as they have not made the expected contributions. JM would therefore welcome support from Forum as to a view on if the policy is now clear and to explore recoupment issue.</p> <p>Questions were raised by Forum members around grey areas for academies, such as the modelling, the local agreement for Suffolk schools, who was involved in local agreement.</p> <p><u>Question:</u> Do Forum members feel it is appropriate for schools to abide by this policy and requested levels of funding and including required for?</p> <p>Following a vote of 11 in favour and 2 against the Forum <b>agreed</b> by majority.</p> <p><b>ACTIONS/OUTCOMES:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JM will write to every academy with the new policy for them to confirm their agreement to this policy. If academies do not abide by this policy, then Schools Forum may need to</li> </ul>

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		<p>consider if this should be dealt with in a separate way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JM will feedback to forum following responses received for schools who do or don't agree to abide by this policy wait to see how many sign up to this policy.</li> <li>• JM to go away and look at policy on PRUs existing arrangements.</li> </ul>
8.	Mental Health in Schools	<p><b>SUMMARY OF MAIN POINTS:</b></p> <p>The Schools Forum currently fund £170,100 as a contribution towards Primary Mental Health Workers (PMHW) in the Wellbeing Service. The PMHW provide a consultative role, facilitate the relationship with schools with commissioned mental health services, provide assessments and undertake some primary mental health treatment.</p> <p>The Schools Forum at its meeting in October, when considering the use of the Dedicated Schools Grant, requested that officers explore with the service the potential for increased investment in PMHW in recognition of the importance of mental health support in schools.</p> <p>In addition to the commissioned service the Green Paper 'Transforming Children and Young People Mental Health' proposes placing mental health support within schools. Suffolk was precluded from being part of wave one of the trailblazers as its provider, Norfolk and Suffolk Foundation Trust is in special measures. However locally, Ipswich and East and West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and Suffolk County Council have committed funds to enable pilot projects across Suffolk which will allow the system to understand what successful schools-based support looks like. Schools have been asked to express an interest if they are interested in participating in the pilot projects.</p> <p>The Schools Forum is prevented from increasing the Dedicated Schools Grant investment in PMHWs as it is not permitted under current regulations, however, should schools wish to invest further they could fund the Wellbeing Service directly.</p> <p>The CCGs are currently developing their Mental</p>

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		<p>Health Strategies which will inform future commissioning. Children and Young People (0-25) have been highlighted as a priority as has the need for early support and interventions, particularly in universal settings such as schools and other educational establishments.</p> <p>It is recognised that many schools currently commission additional support from organisations like Suffolk MIND and 4YP.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b> The Schools Forum to agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing the current commitment of £170,100 from the Dedicated Schools Grant which was a decision that was deferred pending this report.</li> </ul> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">and consider whether to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pursue developing the ability for schools to increase their investment in PMHW capacity on an individual basis.</li> </ul> <p>Comments welcomed from Forum members with a recommended model that schools would support.</p> <p>Questions raised by Forum members around mental health services and increasing need for this provision, models and proposals are made sounds a positive thing to look at.</p> <p>Looked into scope to increase this funding, however DfE regulations do not allow us to do this. SB suggested opportunity to pursue funding through other mechanisms.</p> <p>SC commented would it be useful for schools to be involved in a Task and Finish Group to scope this more broadly and bring back some options. If forum would like to invest in this, we want to do what works best and also the new £20 billion for health services. Options for involvement in future pilots and implementing proposals from the recent needs assessment would be looked at, in partnership with SPCN / Schools, with next steps in January.</p>

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		<p>JM suggested setting up a working party with Mental Health/Inclusion Service along with school colleagues.</p> <p>Work and conversations taking place with CCG and provider to enable us to do that. Need to bring expertise and advice from school colleagues.</p> <p><u>Forum to agree Centrally retained funding:</u> After voting <b>unanimously</b> in favour the Forum <b>agreed</b> to an annual budget of £170,100.</p>
9.	Forward Agenda	<p><u>Add for January:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High Needs Block and funding pressures.</li> <li>• Introducing A New High Needs Funding System in Suffolk – Proposals for Transitional Support Arrangements.</li> <li>• Early Years – funding proforma.</li> </ul> <p><u>Move to April:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools monitoring and financial risk.</li> <li>• Annual review of Suffolk’s Scheme for financing schools.</li> </ul> <p><u>Thank you to Dave Hutton</u> The Chair passed on her thanks to Dave Hutton, Vice Chair, for being a member over the last few years and said we will miss your contribution to Schools Forum.</p>
10.	Date of the next meeting	The next meeting is confirmed as <b>Monday 14 January 2019 at Landmark House.</b>
		Meeting closed at 10.50am.